

**LAURA BATEMAN**

**NACA/NASA Experience:** Hired 1948; Cascade Aerodynamics; later became an Engineering Aide

Laura Bateman began working as a computer in 1948. Hired by Melvin Butler, her first posting was the computing section in Rotating Machine Aerodynamics (which became Cascade Aerodynamics) where she calculated data using a Frieden accounting machine. In a 1990 interview, Bateman recalled her section included three women who had graduated from Hampton University, who were among the first African-American computers hired at Langley. She also noted that promotion and pay raise opportunities for computers were limited. The best way to advance beyond being a computer was to assist with, and get one's name on a technical report. By collaborating on and co-authoring a report with Jack Erwin, she became an Engineering Aide.

Bateman also played basketball for the Langley women's team—the "Sky Chicks." Composed of women who were computers and secretaries, the Sky Chicks played against women's teams from the Navy, and from industries like the power company, whose team was known as the "Kilowatt Cuties".

**Sources:** Panel Discussion with Women Computers" NASA Langley videotape, December 13, 1990.